THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, the 19th November 1948.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at eleven of the clock, the Deputy President (Sri K. Venkataswami Nayudu) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

The Chidambaram Nataraja temple.

* 69. *Q.*—Sri S. A. S. RM. Ramanathan Chettiyar: Will the Hon. the Premier be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Chidambaram Nataraja temple was notified and declared open to Harijans under the Temple Entry Act;

(*b*) if not, what the reasons are for not throwing open the temple for all the people;

(*c*) whether it is a fact that because the Hindus permitted the Harijans to enter the temple, the Gurukkals and Dikshadars of the Chidambaram temple prevented even the Hindus from entering the temple; and

(*d*) whether the Government have so far taken any action against the Dikshadars and Gurukkals of Chidambaram?

The Hon. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan (on behalf of the Hon. the Premier) :—" (*a*) With the coming into force of the Madras Temple Entry Authorization Act, 1947 on 2nd June 1947 all religious institutions in the Province that fall within the definition of ' temple ' in section 2 (2) of the Act, are thrown open to Harijans; no specific notification or declaration is necessary to give effect to this. Harijans entered the Sri Nataraja temple at Chidambaram on 2nd June 1947.

" (*b*) Does not arise.

" (*c*) No.

" (*d*) Does not arise."

Sri R. Suryanarayana Rao :—" May I know what active steps are being taken by the Government to enforce the provisions of the Temple Entry Legislation?"

The Hon. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan :—" This has been enacted into law and the public have been informed of the law also. Such organizations or individuals or bodies that want to enter into temple in pursuance of the law are afforded the necessary protection as they might require. Beyond that I do not think the Government need interfere in the matter. Unless the assistance is denied there is no reason to complain about that."